

Lundahl
1970



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

29 October 1970

Mr. John D. Roth, Executive Secretary
Distinguished Civilian Service Awards Board
Room 3416
U. S. Civil Service Commission
Washington, D. C. 20415

Dear Mr. Roth:

This is in response to Mr. John A. Volpe's letter of 31 August in which he invited me to submit nominations for the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service.

I welcome this opportunity to nominate Mr. Arthur C. Lundahl, Director of the National Photographic Interpretation Center in the Central Intelligence Agency. I believe that Mr. Lundahl's achievements in the development of photographic interpretation techniques for intelligence have been an outstanding contribution to the defense of the United States and that of the Free World. His unusual leadership and competence in this highly technical field and his achievements in support of the National Defense efforts make him a fitting representative of the many career officers who are serving in critical and vital positions in the Federal service.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Richard Helms.

Richard Helms
Director

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Enclosures

BIOGRAPHIC DATA


ARTHUR C. LUNDAHL

Title and Grade : Director, National Photographic Interpretation
Center, Central Intelligence Agency, GS-18

Birth : 1 April 1915, Chicago, Illinois

Education : 1934-39: University of Chicago, B.S., Geology
1939-42: University of Chicago, M.S., Geology
1942 : University of Chicago, Ph.D. (Prelims)
1948 : Eidgenoessische Technische Hochschule,
Zurich, Switzerland, Photogrammetry

Employment : 1941-42: University of Chicago, Instructor in
Photogrammetry
1942-46: U.S. Navy, Commissioned Officer on
active duty, Photographic Intelligence
Specialist
1946-53: U.S. Navy Photographic Interpretation
Center: Chief, Photogrammetry
Division and Assistant Chief Engineer

STATINTL  Central Intelligence Agency: Director,
National Photographic Interpretation
Center since 1961

CITATION

ARTHUR C. LUNDAHL

A distinguished pioneer in photographic interpretation for more than a quarter of a century, he has been a dynamic force for improving intelligence vital to the security of the United States by adding a new dimension to the interpretation of the evidence.

His [REDACTED] distinguished career with the Central Intelligence Agency has been marked by exceptional ability, imagination, drive and dedication. His professional competence, personality and warmth have made him an inspiring leader in the Intelligence Community and a key advisor to many high Government officials.

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Summary of Achievements

1. Mr. Photo Interpreter. To those who are privy to the inner workings of the U. S. Intelligence Community, Mr. Lundahl's name is synonymous with photo interpretation. When CIA decided to enter the field, Mr. Lundahl was selected to develop and direct its photo interpretation program [REDACTED]. He was well prepared for this assignment by teaching photogrammetry at the University of Chicago and eleven years of photo interpretation experience with the Navy as an officer in World War II and as a top civilian afterward.

Upon taking on his assignment in CIA, he planned and with contagious enthusiasm implemented programs to train a large corps of experts and to develop new equipment and techniques for photo interpretation. Under his leadership, this activity grew into what is now the National Photographic Interpretation Center -- an interagency organization which has provided information vital to the security of the United States for more than a decade.

2. Scientist and Innovator. Mr. Lundahl has played a leading role in the development of photo interpretation from an art using crude magnifying and measuring devices to a science using highly sophisticated viewing, enhancing and mensuration instruments harnessed to computers to draw out the maximum and most accurate information from photography. Because much of Mr. Lundahl's work is classified, his contributions to the advancement of the science of photogrammetry and photo interpretation have been denied the public recognition they deserve.

Although the growth in importance of photography to national security resulted from the efforts of many people both in industry and Government, Arthur Lundahl through his leadership, foresightedness and dedication is the one name that can represent their achievements in interpretation technology and organizational management.

Additional Details

1. The Cuban missile crisis in 1962 is an excellent example of the importance of photo interpretation in general and of Mr. Lundahl and his organization in particular. Under his direction, photo interpreters discovered the missile threat, and he personally explained the evidence to the most senior officials of the U. S. and Allied Governments. The accurate and rapid analysis of photography was of vital importance to the Government then and it continues to be so today.

2. In 1960 an intensive study of the Government's intelligence effort resulted in the conversion of Mr. Lundahl's organization to the National Photographic Interpretation Center to serve all elements of the Government. The success of the Center is due in large measure to Mr. Lundahl's ability to gain the cooperation of all branches of the Government involved in photo interpretation for intelligence.

3. Mr. Lundahl holds two U. S. patents: one on Rotating Plates for Parallax Measurements and one for the ANZE Camera. He has written many technical papers and articles, including Photographic Intelligence (the Naval Reserve Course Syllabus), Naval Photographic Interpretation, Applied Photography - Superservant of Man (a lecture given at the Cosmos Club, of which he is a member), and Photogeography and Photogeology: A Review and Prospectus, as well as numerous classified papers.

Benefits

1. Mr. Lundahl has consistently encouraged cooperative ventures in research and procurement with other agencies, sharing achievements of his program with others at considerable savings to the Government.

2. The National Photographic Interpretation Center under Mr. Lundahl's leadership has saved the Government untold resources by furnishing a truly integrated service to the Intelligence Community.

3. The interpretation of photography yields unbiased, hard evidence on developments in areas of the world where a decade ago little more than speculation was available. No price tag can be placed on the firm basis this provides for the formulation of U. S. foreign and military policy.

Awards

In 1962 Mr. Lundahl received the following: Letter of Commendation from the President and one of fourteen Presidential Silver Cuban Crisis Calendars. In 1963 he received the following honors: National Civil Service League Career Service Award, Presidential Unit Citation and Certificate of Commendation for Meritorious Service with the Central Intelligence Agency, Fifth Naval District Reserve Intelligence Annual Award for Outstanding Contribution to National Defense, the American Society of Photogrammetry's FMA Photo Interpretation Award, and the American Society of Photogrammetry's Honorary Membership Award which is the highest honor offered by the Society.